DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 478 813 HE 036 043

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TITLE	A Chance To Succeed: The CHANCE Program Alumni Survey. Participants from 1968 through 2002.
INSTITUTION	Northern Illinois Univ., De Kalb.
PUB DATE	2002-00-00
NOTE	32p.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Research (143)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Access to Education; *Alumni; *Educational Attainment ; Employment Patterns; Telephone Surveys
IDENTIFIERS	*Chance Program; *Northern Illinois University

ABSTRACT

In summer 2002, a telephone survey was conducted to learn about Northern Illinois University (NIU) alumni who had been admitted through the CHANCE program at some point in its 34-year history. The completed survey included responses from more than 500 alumni representing students admitted from 1968 through 2001. The alumni were overwhelmingly positive in their answers. Nearly all said that the program offered an opportunity to go to college that they did not feel they had before. Respondents found attending NIU to be a very positive experience and thought that the university provided them with a quality educational experience in a diverse environment. The vast majority (94%) said they would and had recommended CHANCE to others. The majority of these alumni work in Business and Education, but there is a wide range of employment and responsibility among the participants. Findings show that the CHANCE program has been an outstanding success in the eyes of the participants. Seven appendixes contain data tables. (Contains 11 tables and 3 figures.) (SLD)

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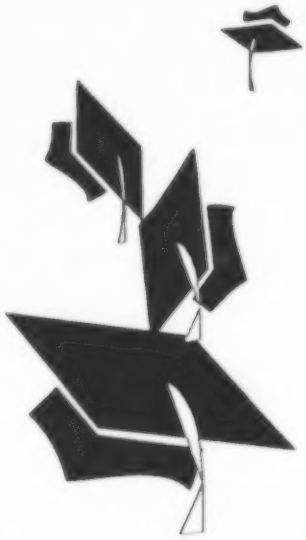
A Chance to Succeed: The CHANCE Program Alumni Survey

Participants from 1968 through 2002



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Data Collection: NIU Public Opinion Lab

Conducted Summer 2002

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A Chance to Succeed: The CHANCE Alumni Survey

Summer - Fall 2002

Executive Summary

In Summer 2002, a telephone survey was conducted in order to learn about NIU alumni who had been admitted through the CHANCE program at some point in its 34-year history. The completed survey included responses from over 500 alumni representing students from the inception of the program in 1968 through 2001.

As this report shows, the alumni were overwhelmingly positive in their answers. For nearly all of them, the program offered an opportunity to go to college that they didn't feel they had before. Many stated that they would probably not have attended college at all if it had not been for CHANCE.

Those interviewed found attending NIU to be a very positive experience and felt that the university provided them with a quality educational experience in a diverse environment with outstanding resources that they would not have had otherwise. In the study, 94% of the respondents stated that they would and have recommended the CHANCE program to others.

Alumni surveyed represented an array of majors in all of the colleges at Northern. On average, the group graduated in just over 5 years. About 40% went on to further their education after graduating from NIU, with 28% completing masters, doctorates or professional degrees and many more in progress.

In terms of current employment, the majority of alumni work in Business (27%) and Education (25%). Because the study spans the lives of graduates from a 30-year period, there is a wide range of employment and responsibility among the participants. Within Business, for example, about 3% own their own businesses with another 10% in administration and management. Within Education, about 4% are K-12 administrators and 3% work in higher education, some as faculty.

When asked about how active they were while in college, the group overall was very involved in the university in some capacity or another. About 70% indicated that they had participated in activities while in school, including ethnically based organizations (34%) such as Black Choir (10%), Greek organizations (32%) and academically based organizations (17%).

After reviewing all of the data, it becomes very apparent that the CHANCE program has been an outstanding success in the eyes of graduates. The program offered support and motivation, giving students the opportunity to reach their goals and dreams. Through the voices of the respondents, it becomes clear that attending a university like NIU has been a life altering, positive experience. The CHANCE program offers a unique group of students the chance to expand their horizons, grow and develop as citizens, and become positive members of society. Their gratitude for such opportunity is overwhelming.

Background of the Project

In the Spring semester of 2002, the University Assessment Panel approved funding for the largest survey of CHANCE alumni that had ever been attempted. Using a near complete database of students from the program that went back to its inception in 1968, the program sent over 2700

names to the Alumni Foundation to be matched with current address and telephone information. The Foundation provided just under 2000 names with telephone numbers.

In April of 2002, a postcard was sent to all of the individuals on the list, informing them of the survey and asking them to provide current contact information if needed, or to notify us if they were not interested in participating in the project.

Survey questions were generated by the CHANCE staff and refined to a telephone survey structure. In July, the NIU Public Opinion Lab took over the survey and began training its phone staff. About one half of the interviewers were current CHANCE students, making a wonderful connection between them and alumni.

Throughout the Summer and into the Fall, interviewers diligently pursued alumni to respond to the survey. A total of 25.2% of potential respondents completed the survey. Below is the deposition of contact information provided by the Public Opinion Lab:

Chance Program Alumni Study Depositions	
Number of cases with telephone numbers	1996
Number of completed interviews	503
Nonworking number/R does not live there	615
Language barrier	10
Multiple attempts to reach graduate	702
Refusals	54
Ineligible - said not a graduate of Chance Program	10
Hung up on interviewer (cannot tell if reached right household)	93
Other	9

Entering Year

The distribution of alumni from the various entering cohorts is fairly evenly spread throughout the nearly 40 years of the program:

- 4.2% from the 1960's
- 38.0% from the 1970's
- 31.4% from the 1980's
- 27.6% from the 1990's
- Two respondents from the pilot class from 1968.
- Graduates from entering cohorts including 1997.

Graduation Distributions

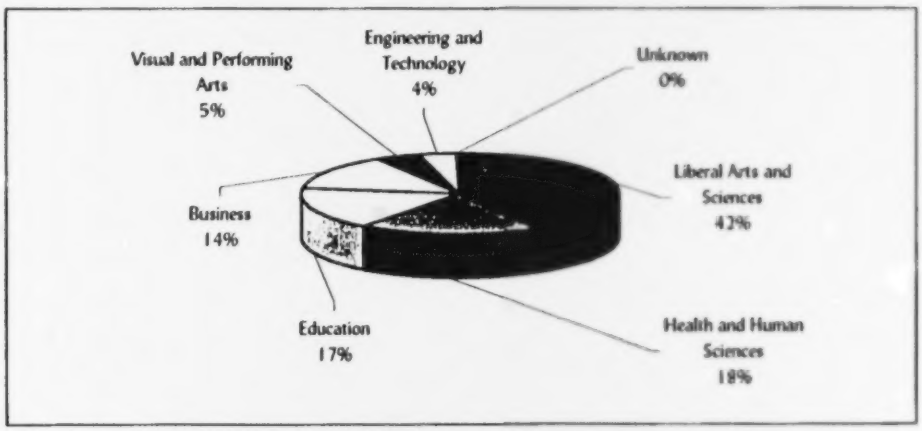
An analysis of graduation years shows the following:

- 115 students (22.9%) graduated in the 1970's
- 167 students (33.2%) graduated in the 1980's
- 174 students (34.8%) graduated in the 1990's
- 46 students (9.1%) graduated in the 2000's
- The number of years to graduation ranged from 2 to 11.5
- The average number of years to graduation was 5.03, however, there was a correlation between graduation year and average. This suggested that there were different graduation patterns in different decades. Calculations showed that:

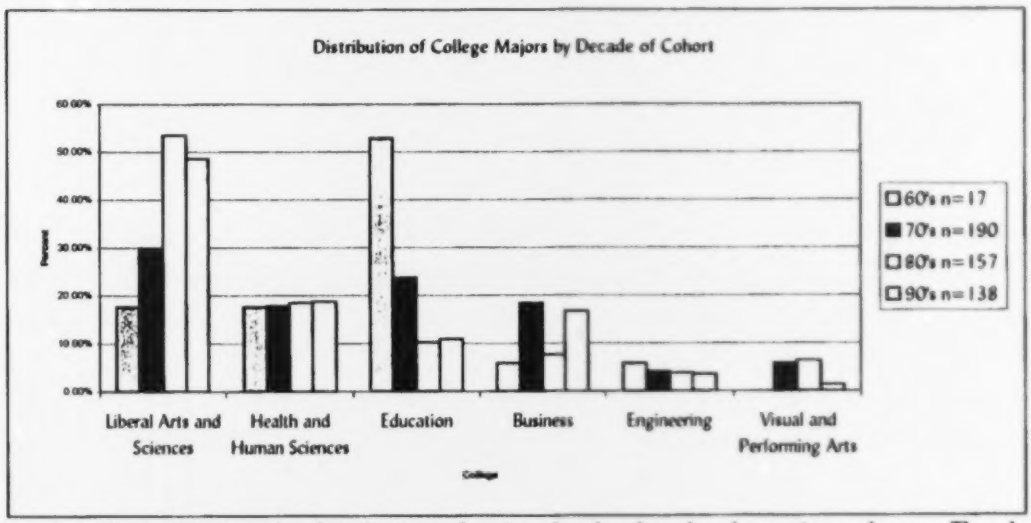
- Students from the 1970's graduated on average in 4.6 years
- Students from the 1980's graduated on average in 5.1 years
- Students in the 1990's graduated on average in 5.4 years

Colleges

Graduates initial degrees came from the following colleges:



College	Number	Percent
Liberal Arts and Sciences	211	41.9%
Health and Human Sciences	92	18.3%
Education	85	16.9%
Business	71	14.1%
Visual and Performing Arts	23	4.6%
Engineering and Technology	20	4.0%
Unknown	1	.2%



Above is a chart, showing the distribution of majors by the decade of entering cohorts. The chart shows that the distribution of majors is somewhat different when viewed by decade. There are more liberal arts majors from the 1980's and 1990's and more education majors in the 60's and

70's, probably consistent with the distributions at the university as a whole during those time periods.

Additional Education/Training

Of the graduates in the sample, just over 40% of the group went on to further their education after graduating from NIU.

6% currently have advanced degrees (such as PhD, EdD and JD) with an additional 10% still in the process of obtaining these degrees.

22% have completed a master's degree, with 8% still in the process of working on such a degree.

2.5% have obtained or are in the process of obtaining a second Bachelor's degree.

2% have obtained or are in the process of obtaining an Associate's degree.

10% have obtained or are in the process of completing a certificate. Most of these are in health services or education.

How likely would you be to recommend the CHANCE program to others?

Of those that participated in the study, 94% states that they were very or somewhat likely to recommend the program, indicating a fairly high level of satisfaction among the participants in the study.

What is your current job or position?

The employment types for the group are fairly diverse. The table below shows the categories of employment and their distributions.

Type of Employment	Percent
Business	27.2%
Education	25.0%
Social Service	8.0%
Finance and Insurance	6.6%
Health Services/Nursing	6.0%
Technology/Computing	4.2%
Engineering	2.8%
Law and Law Enforcement	2.6%
Research	1.6%
Communication/Journalism	1%
Other	3%
No Response	11.5%

Within Business, 3% are business owners, 11% are managers or administrators, and the rest are in customer service and marketing.

Within Education, along with teachers, about 4% serve as administrators. The group also includes 16 individuals in higher education (3%), including 12 administrators and 4 professors.

In Health Services/Nursing, about half of the group are nurses or nurse administrators.

In Law and Law Enforcement, 5 are lawyers, 9 are police officers and detectives.

How comfortable were you at NIU?

In answer to this question, in total about 74% of all alumni indicated that they were "Very Comfortable" on the NIU campus. In addition, just over 1% indicated that they were "never comfortable" or "not comfortable most of the time". About 25% indicated that they were "somewhat comfortable" or "sometimes comfortable, sometimes not".

Elsewhere in the study, about 16% of alumni indicated that understanding diversity is something that they gained from attending NIU. Although, current students often struggle with the issues of diversity, apparently after they leave the university, they acknowledge the benefit of such an experience. Also students indicated a strong sense of family with good friends and social opportunities.

Qualitative, Open-ended Question Summaries

Question 1. Did you participate in any university groups, clubs or other activities? If so, which ones?

387 participants, (77% of those in the study) indicated that they did participate in activities while at NIU.

•Ethnically-Based Social Organizations

About 34% (153 participants) indicated that they were in ethnically based organizations. Over 50 (10%) of these individuals were in Black Choir, including one of the founders.

Additionally alumni reported being involved with a number of other ethnically based organizations. Several indicated that they had been in leadership roles in some of these. These include:
Black Student Caucus/Union
Black Theater Workshop
BROTHERS
Indian Student Association
Jewish Hillel
Korean America Club
Latino Club
NAACP
OLAS
SISTERS
South Asian Society
Spanish Dance Group
VALE

•Greek Organizations

32% (164 participants) stated that they were members of Greek organizations. These included both social and service organizations. Several alumni indicated that they had been in leadership positions in their organizations or the overriding Pan Hellenic association.

•Major Related Organizations

17% of the participants (83) were involved in organizations associated with their majors. Some of these were also ethnically based organizations such as the National Society for Black Engineers and the Black Business Association.

•Athletics

16% (79) indicated that they had participated in athletics. This included team and club sports, intramurals and cheerleading.

•Miscellaneous Activities

About 25% of the participants were involved in a variety of activities. About 14% of the participants (68) were involved programs including honors programs, tutoring and mentoring programs, speech and debate, dance organizations, University Judicial Board, the Northern Star, CAB and many other campus activities. About 3% (15) indicated that they had held positions in

the Student Association (SA). About 6% were involved in residence hall activities and governance. 1.4% were involved in religious activities. This particular statistic is deceiving, however. In the early years of the CHANCE program, before there was a "black church" in DeKalb, the Black Choir organized religious services. It is still true today that a large number of CHANCE admitted students have strong faith and actively participate in religious services and events, separate from the university, but this is still a big part of their social affiliation on the campus.

Question 2. In a sentence or two, while in college and since you have graduated, how do you feel that the CHANCE program has made an impact on your life?

This open-ended question revealed a number of different impressions of the role that CHANCE has played on the participants' lives. A total of 93% of the participants in the study stated that the program had had a positive impact in their lives. Additionally, only two alumni stated that the program had had a negative impact, despite the impression outside of this study that somehow the program may marginalize students, hold them back, or single them out. Whatever they may have experienced or felt while in college, as graduates, their view is overwhelmingly positive. Not only were the responses positive, they were often moving and occasionally passionate.

There is no question that the CHANCE program has touched the lives of most graduates in a very important way. Most respondents find it difficult to separate out the impact of college versus the impact of CHANCE on their experience. When they speak specifically about the program, however, it is clear that for most students, the CHANCE program has provided a phenomenal opportunity for them: to go to and graduate from a quality four-year university, to be supported and motivated to complete the experience, to be shown what the world has to offer, to aspire to and achieve exciting goals, and to have fulfilling careers.

A total of 495 of 504 respondents had a comment about this topic.

•Admission

25% (122 respondents) of those that responded stated that the primary contribution of CHANCE was to provide them with admission to NIU. Here are some specific comments on this perspective:

"The chances are likely that I wouldn't have gone to college. They changed my life forever."

"I would not have been able to attend NIU without CHANCE. I would have had to go to a junior college. It changed my life immeasurably."

"If not for the CHANCE program, I would not have been able to go to a university. Because I was able to enroll in a university, my educational and career goals have been met."

"It allowed me to go to college. My grades weren't high enough. I wasn't accepted in any other colleges due to grades. The CHANCE program saw the capability in me."

"It made me go to college. I didn't have plans for a university but through the CHANCE program I had the opportunity to go there. The chance to enroll itself was helpful to me."

"It gave me the opportunity to get accepted. I got a degree and a master's degree from Northern."

"I was able to access higher education. It created a future for me and taught me management, people and life skills."

"It gave me the opportunity to get into school because at the time, I didn't have a very high ACT score. I did pretty well in school and I just didn't do well on standardized tests. It allowed me to compete with others at a good school."

"I was able to attend a university that my whole family graduated from."

"...It gave me the opportunity to go to college and I knew I needed to go to college. It gave me the sense of knowing that I could overcome an obstacle and be successful and share that with others. It opened up future doors for me, but it's given an edge for people to take advantage of and be successful."

•Graduation

18% of the respondents (90 participants) stated that graduating from NIU was the biggest impact of the CHANCE program. Some of their individual comments included:

"It was the vehicle that allowed me to get my college degree, so it made all the difference in the world."

"I was able to earn a college degree and able to get a very good job, and I met my husband at NIU, so it made a huge difference. I wouldn't have been able to go to NIU because I had a low GPA from high school. I got a scholarship through the CHANCE program for tuition because my grades were A's and B's. It gave me a chance for college."

"...I think CHANCE was a good program for minority students. I think through CHANCE I was able to prove to myself and others that I could make it through college successfully."

"Just allowing me to get a degree from Northern. NIU had a major impact."

"It was the most important factor in my graduating. I don't think I could have done it without it (CHANCE)."

"The program made my degree possible and the living I have now. I also got the support I needed from the CHANCE program and enjoyed the CHANCE program. I wound up being a tutor for the program myself."

"I would not have ever graduated from college without the CHANCE program and I would have never been admitted to NIU. The first year is crucial and with their help, I made it through."

•Opportunity

16% (79 graduates) spoke of opportunity. More than just being given a chance to go to college, many students saw the impact as exposure to a new world in college. They spoke of many opportunities that were not a part of their understanding before attending college.

"It opens doors and continues to open them. A wonderful experience."

"It provided a foot in the door to the future and it gave me a chance to prove myself, especially being a minority. It helped me achieve."

"Just knowing that there's a program like [CHANCE] is good. Just knowing that there are programs out there that give someone an opportunity to better themselves is good, especially for inner city kids."

"I guess it reminds me that everyone has the ability to get an education if they are given the opportunity. Grades are not everything."

"It gave me an opportunity to make it in the real world and education is the only way to make it in the real world."

"I wouldn't be where I am today if it wasn't for the CHANCE program. They took what society said was substandard. CHANCE said, 'No, this is standard' and filled in gaps that were left open because of a lack of tax money in areas."

"By being given the opportunity, I have achieved the confidence to know I can achieve my goals. I saw a better way of life and learned good habits."

"I wouldn't have probably gone to college. It gave me the opportunity to work for 10 years. I was very productive. NIU CHANCE program gave me the opportunity to get an education and further my education after graduation. I needed to go away for college."

"It exposed me to an opportunity that showed me the value of higher education, a more submerged experience that other [educational] options would have offered."

"I would say that CHANCE gave the opportunities to travel and the support I got from counselors and the resources that CHANCE gave me access to. I was able to study abroad."

"It allowed me an opportunity that otherwise I wouldn't be able to take advantage of, getting into a recognized university. It provided tools and assistance to help me through in spite of my status while I was there."

"It gave me an opportunity to go to school when I may not have without the CHANCE program. Today I hold a professional position which gives students the opportunity to access where they may not have."

"I've never been unemployed."

•<u>Support</u>

8% of the alumni (41) stated that the program impacted them most by offering a strong level of support. Statements that supported that include:

"The support of the program allowed me to go through college. It gave me someone to identify with. I felt like I would not have gotten through college without this program. The counselors helped me to continue on. This program helped me meet my goal of graduating from NIU. The teachers gave me the support necessary to stay at NIU. Very meaningful program for minority students. Without this program many students would not be allowed to get in and finish."

"I knew that I had someone to consult with in terms of any problems that I had whether personal or academic."

"It was the CHANCE program that gave me the strength to continue in college."

"[It impacted me] by working with people who were concerned with my education. It helped me to focus on what I needed to do to graduate."

"It gave me guidance, a big school and I still had special attention."

"The individualized program planning that they set for you, compared to general admissions, it's much of a smaller, close knit family atmosphere type of program. The administrators care."

"It's totally given me a better outlook. I give people second chances now. I give people the benefit of the doubt."

•Success

Another 11% stated that the program helped them become a success or helped them gain the skills needed to be successful, both while at NIU and in the workforce.

"If it weren't for the CHANCE program, I wouldn't be making the salary I'm making today, and it also made me into the person I am today."

"Without the program, I wouldn't have been as successful as I am today. I can't underestimate its value."

"It was critical at the time, and that's why I'm answering the survey."

"The knowledge that was given me through the program [helped me] to complete the curriculum and made me feel comfortable with the professors. It helped me complete school and has benefited me since then."

"It has improved my lifestyle because I have a college degree and it also allowed me to get into a graduate school program because if I were not admitted to NIU I probably just would have gone to a community college."

"I think they've made me a lifetime learner. They've made me want to help other people. They've made a significant impact economically in my life."

•No impact or a negative impact

7% (35 respondents) said that the program had no or a negative impact on them.

Most stated something like this:
"It didn't really make an impact, just getting me started."

Only two respondents have very specific complaints about the program's impact:

"I was placed in courses just to get the money. I could've been accepted normally. The classes were for people with 11th grade capacities and I wanted to be challenged."

"They were looking to keep their statistics up, not concerned about my career I wanted to pursue. They treat you like you're in high school. It's not for people who seriously wanted to go to college. They didn't recognize that I wasn't like the rest of the people in the CHANCE program."

•Career Goals

5% (26) of the alumni stated that the program helped them accomplish their career goals.

"I'm a professional. I have a career. It couldn't have happened without CHANCE."

"Started me in the direction of becoming a professional versus not going to college."

"In nursing there are not a lot of black people, so I made it because they gave me the opportunity."

"I wouldn't be where I am without it, with a Ph.D."

•Motivation

3% (13 alums) found that CHANCE helped them stay motivated.

"It made me work a lot harder."

"The opportunity to see more people of color in leadership roles. The CHANCE program made sure we saw these people to give motivation."

"The CHANCE program has taught me that education is possible for everyone. It taught me that how well you do depends on how well you decide to do."

•Miscellaneous statements

About 3% (12 participants) shared comments that didn't fit into any of the above categories, but expressed various ways in which the program touched them as people. Here is some of what they said:

"They made me look at life more realistically. They helped me out, setting my goals and how to prioritize my time."

"I believe the program allowed me to explore different areas of myself. It gave me the opportunity to become a more well rounded individual."

"...[They] made me less scared in life."

Question 3. What component of the CHANCE program do you feel was most helpful to you at NIU?

•Counseling and support:
In response to this question, 38% stated that counseling and CHANCE staff support were the most important aspects of the program to them.

"Someone to communicate with and go for support and help educationally..."

"I still remember how great my counselor was..."

"Having an assigned counselor and having some direction from day 1."

•Admission:
23% stated that the opportunity to get into NIU was the most beneficial part of the CHANCE program. For nearly all, that was a positive thing. For a couple, it was not seen as a positive.

"Gave me a chance to go to a good school."

"Even though I didn't test well, I still had the opportunity to attend NIU."

"I think it gave me an opportunity to become a member of one of the top universities in Illinois."

"I really didn't like it. It just got me into school."

•Tutoring and other academic supports:
11% of the respondents stated that tutoring was a great benefit of participating in the CHANCE program.

"The tutoring and the assistance. If you needed help, there it was."

•First year coursework:
8% of respondents stated that the coursework in the first year was the most helpful.

"It provided the additional coursework that I was lacking."

"The classes were smaller, more individual attention."

"Having my classes designed with extra support"

"The one-year English and Math courses were very helpful."

"The math classes I took to get me ready for the regular classes."

"They forced me to take classes that I wouldn't have taken on my own."

•Miscellaneous:
Of the remaining 20% of respondents
5% stated again that the greatest assistance was giving them an opportunity to succeed
5% stated that the program offered them nothing special
4% appreciated financial guidance and support through the program
2% felt that the orientation and first year assisted them in a successful transition to the university experience
2% found that the program helped them build skills that they would need to be successful. 2% stated that the entire program was of benefit.

4. What was the single most important thing you gained from attending a university like NIU?
Responses to this question covered a range of impacts, but the majority referred to the degree and the quality of education that they received at NIU. Many spoke of the opportunity to experience diversity. Others cited the opportunity to gain independence meet good friends and develop new skills. Below is some of what they said.

•The Degree/the Education:
40% (200) of the alumni identified their degree and/or educational experience as the most important thing they gained from NIU.

"I gained a really solid overall education, a well-rounded education."

"A good education, very respected reputation in the field I work in."

"All of the degrees. Including the Ph.D."

"Education is the obvious thing. To learn a little more about people, responsibility."

"A good business degree and a good business education."

"The quality education. The education for business was fantastic."

"Getting the degree and the people there made sure you got through college."

"The accomplishment of having done it [the degree] and having the skill to go into the workforce."

"The academics they offered challenged me..."

"The English department. In their department I discovered my passion."

•Skills and Experiences
About 21% (over 100 respondents) pointed to a variety of experiences or skills that they gained from going to NIU.

"Broadened my experience."

"I feel fortunate that there were a lot of things to participate in..."

"I did like the size of the campus. It wasn't too small or too big."

"So much possibility of what you could do. Many avenues of people to help."

"A competitive edge, comfort in your education. Knowing that I learned along side other individuals who would be competition in the workforce."

"The ability to think for myself. The interactions I had with others."

"The campus lifestyle and being involved in the organizations teaches you things that you cannot learn in classes."

"The commitment to excellence."

"Grew as a person. Got to know myself a lot better. My potential."

•With regard to specific experiences:

"The Asian program where I took a foreign language."

"Accomplishment of two movies that we made for thesis."

"African American history course taught by John Higanson."

"Being part of a fraternity."

"Learning a general education."

"I had good biology professors."

"An international internship."

"An internship that provided practical work experience."

"It has everything."

"The nursing program emphasized leadership. Got a lot of confidence and skills from it."

•Diversity

About 17% (86) of the alumni cited an understanding of diversity as what they gained. Two expressed such diversity as racism or prejudice.

"...[I got] a real good picture of what the whole world was like."

"A greater understanding and appreciation of diversity, exposure to their cultures."

"Becoming worldly, involved with people from different walks of life..."

"Comparing NIU to other universities, there are lots of culturally diverse areas."

"Good exposure to other racial groups that I wouldn't have had in the inner city."

"How the society is actually set up. I was the only black female student to graduate out of the education department, and there was only one black male. I think that says a lot.... if it weren't for CHANCE, I probably wouldn't have been at NIU."

"I experienced discrimination and that taught me about the real world when I got into the workforce."

"I learned about racism."

"I had to remain focused on what it was that I wanted to achieve. As an African American I was made very uncomfortable so I had to stay very focused."

"...Diversity and just learning more about people. Everyone has different backgrounds and circumstances. Everyone isn't just a cardboard cut-out."

"Giving me more worldly knowledge of society and history. The diversity. It gives you a different perspective of how you communicate with other people. You don't feel segregated from other people as much after you leave Northern."

•Independence

8% (43) of the alumni found independence to be something that they gained at NIU.

"I was able to find out for myself that I was capable of doing things and that I was given the chance to do it. I could follow my vision and do what I wanted to do in my life."

"It teaches you how to grow up and make independent decisions."

"You can do what you want to do. I achieved a lot there I might not have achieved elsewhere because everyone there was behind me, ready to help."

•Friends and Relationships

As most of us know, the social aspect of the college experience is an extremely important part. 7% of the alumni stated that their social experience was the most important part of their NIU experience.

" I met my wife at NIU"

"The closeness. It was like a school within a school. Lifetime friends."

"The network of friends that you develop and on which you can rely in the future."

•Other aspects

About 5% (27) had other positive comments about their experience.

"I finally decided on a major. The department was small. It was an encouraging, nurturing environment. The theater department has a great reputation. A significant amount of people have gone on to do work in their craft and make a living of it."

"Self-enrichment and the ability to want more from life."

"More self esteem. It pushed me to keep going and not to stop."

"I became more well rounded. I broke out of my shell."

"The responsibility of living on your own and making your own decisions."

"Overall, I look back and realized it helped me prepare for the future."

•None or No Response
About 2% (10 respondents) either gave no response to this question (4) or did not think that anything was gained from attending NIU (6).

5. *Open Ended Comments*
When asked for any comments on the program, participants had a variety of thoughts. Of 503 participants in the survey, 277 (55%) shared comments. Most were broken into the following categories:

• "Thank you!"
The largest group, 72 (26%), offered their thanks and appreciation for the program. The comments included:
"I would like to say a thousand times thanks."

"Thank you for taking a chance on me. I used it to my advantage."

"Thank you for the opportunity and the assistance they've given me, which contributed to the person that I am."

"Thank you for the opportunity they gave me because many students failed their first year at NIU but because of them, they've helped me be what I am today."

"Thank you for the opportunity. I guess I wasn't college material, but you gave me the chance."

"Thank you, because I probably wouldn't have been able to get the good job I've gotten and the opportunity to go to NIU. It gives people the chance to prove themselves."

"Thank you...It made my parents feel better about me. They met lots of people associated with the program. They felt comfortable leaving me at NIU."

"Thanks for believing in me because now my life is to believe in others who no one else believes in."

• "Keep it going"

60 (22% of all comments) offered the thought that the university should keep the program in existence. Some of the more interesting of these included:

"Keep up the good work and I hope they stay in existence because it gives children the chance to do other things, some children may not go to college."

"I hope they never leave there. It's really good for people who don't do well on standardized tests. I thank them for everything."

"I hope they keep it around for others to have the chance I did."

• "An excellent opportunity..."

24 (9%) identified that the program was an excellent opportunity. Here is a sampling of these comments:

"I'm just lucky that they gave me a chance and was able to go to college and I would recommend it to anyone that makes use of the program."

"I'm really glad that they are there. It really does help a lot of minority students. It gives them an opportunity. I needed a push...a shot...and the chance."

"I'm so grateful that they accepted me and hung in there with me all the way through. It was a great opportunity."

"I appreciate the opportunity offered to me that I will carry with and experience throughout my life. There is an opportunity for students who weren't able to show their potential originally."

"I would not be the person I am now. I had the chance to become something."

• "It made a difference in my life..."

58 participants (21%) saw particular value to their CHANCE opportunity.

"I appreciate the program because it got me to where I am today. Without it I wouldn't have a master's and probably would be working at McDonalds."

"Because I am a minority, I wouldn't have had the advantage."

"CHANCE was the best thing that ever happened to me. I got my degree."

"I am glad that it (CHANCE) is still in existence. It is a great opportunity. I think it is definitely needed. It gives you a second chance."

"If not for the program, I wouldn't have been able to get into a university. I liked the fact that the CHANCE people keep an eye on how you're doing and help you."

"It was very beneficial...the support that I received from them made my academic career a success."

"You guys gave me a chance. I've had a 22-year career...I'm very grateful and I've been very successful. I've got a great life."

"Now I realize (being 50) what institutional commitment had to be made and I'm even more appreciative now than I was earlier in my life."

• "I'm glad it's still here!"
Thirteen participants acknowledged that they were glad the program still existed. Generally the comments were summed up by one participant in particular.

"I appreciate the fact that it was put in place and I'm glad to know it's still around and able to help other students."

•The staff
Though the staff is mentioned in a number of contexts in the study, three spoke very specifically about them. Their opinions were powerful enough to move them to a separate category.

"I remember people that worked in the program, very warm and encouraging. People were there to talk to us, willing to listen to us. That is what helped us the most..."

"The counselors were phenomenal. They were very supportive and dedicated to their job."

"The staff members were great. It made me realize that I wanted to be in education. I've moved from the classroom up through administration."

• 'Big Ups' to Mr. Mitchell
Several individuals spoke of their relationships with specific staff members in very warm and respectful ways. Included in the list were Deacon Davis, founder of the program; Bob Stearns, the first CHANCE director; Eddie Williams who worked with the program closely in the early years; and several counselors for the program. Singled out by a several former students, Leroy Mitchell received the most acknowledgement.

•Suggestions
24 participants (9%) offered suggestions regarding the program. Here are some of them:

"Get the word out that the program is around...let kids that fit the profile know it is available."

"Continue to reach out to the student. Begin at middle school."

"Criteria need to be a little tougher. Too easy for some people."

"I think that maybe the CHANCE program should be more lenient towards Caucasians. It mainly drafts African Americans and Hispanics."

"I have students who go through CHANCE and some have problems with financial aid. I would like the program to be more assistive with financial aid."

"...It would help if they give you proper business etiquette and such. They help you get a job but don't really give you anything as to what to expect once you're in the actual work force."

"I think the fact that they are trying to diversify the school and get more kids in there is great, but try not to just get them in, get them through with a degree."

"They should continue to check with older students like juniors and seniors."

"Encourage their students to do internships."

"Maybe have something on the graduate level for people who have good grades but score poorly on the GRE."

"If any job opportunities are open, make them available to those who have been through the CHANCE program and know what it's all about."

"I would like to see some type of reunion happen."

"Thank you and you should consider a separate CHANCE alumni organization, I would be willing to be a part of any organization that they decided to create, besides just financial support."

•Volunteers

About a dozen of the respondents offered to become involved in the program in some way or another. They suggested activities such as becoming mentors, speaking at CHANCE events, working with the alumni and recruiting for jobs in their area.

"Keep on going forward and encourage all their students and minorities that they can succeed and reach their highest goals. They should bring alumni back in to tell new students about their experiences. I would be willing to come back and help with anything that they need."

•Negative comments and/or bad experience

Fifteen respondents (5%) spoke about concerns or negative experiences that they had with the program.

"A few of the classes at the beginning were not needed."

"The first couple of classes kept me separate from the rest of the student population. Almost felt hindered because you weren't able to experience all of the competition."

"Except for using it as a means to get into NIU, I don't remember any other single event that took place. I got nothing. No counselor, nothing."

"I didn't really know what CHANCE was. They said I had to get help in college math. I thought it was racially biased. I had honors classes. We all came from really good schools and good

GPA's. The CHANCE program is racially biased. It does nothing to encourage students. It just lets NIU enroll blacks and Hispanics. Never would have joined."

"I wish I knew more. I wish the people at the head of CHANCE would have tried to contact me. There was an initial meeting, but after that there was really nothing. If there were activities, I was not informed about it."

"My daughter went to the CHANCE program, and they don't seem as interested for people to get through as much as they used to."

"I didn't take the ACT so I had to join CHANCE to go to school. I was out of it after the first year and I'm glad."

"They switched my counselor about three times. But thanks"

Appendixes

Appendix A – Entering Cohort Distributions

Appendix B -- Frequency Breakdown by Graduation Year

Appendix C– Number of Years to Graduation

Appendix D – Majors

Appendix E – Additional Education
- -Current Work Status
- -CHANCE program recommendations
- -Group Participation in college

Appendix F – Current Type of Place Employed

Appendix G – Current Employment Groupings

Appendix A

Entering Cohort Distribution

	Entering Cohort	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not given	1	.2	.2	.2
	1968	2	.4	.4	.6
	1969	15	3.0	3.0	3.6
	1970	18	3.6	3.6	7.2
	1971	17	3.4	3.4	10.5
	1972	13	2.6	2.6	13.1
	1973	18	3.6	3.6	16.7
	1974	10	2.0	2.0	18.7
	1975	30	6.0	6.0	24.7
	1976	28	5.6	5.6	30.2
	1977	26	5.2	5.2	35.4
	1978	11	2.2	2.2	37.6
	1979	19	3.8	3.8	41.4
	1980	11	2.2	2.2	43.5
	1981	15	3.0	3.0	46.5
	1982	15	3.0	3.0	49.5
	1983	14	2.8	2.8	52.3
	1984	14	2.8	2.8	55.1
	1985	16	3.2	3.2	58.3
	1986	14	2.8	2.8	61.0
	1987	14	2.8	2.8	63.8
	1988	25	5.0	5.0	68.8
	1989	19	3.8	3.8	72.6
	1990	13	2.6	2.6	75.1
	1991	16	3.2	3.2	78.3
	1992	17	3.4	3.4	81.7
	1993	29	5.8	5.8	87.5
	1994	23	4.6	4.6	92.0
	1995	18	3.6	3.6	95.6
	1996	21	4.2	4.2	99.8
	1997	1	.2	.2	100.0
	Total	503	100.0	100.0	

Appendix B

Breakdown of Graduation Years

Interpretation information: In the "Year" column, A "2" after the year indicates "Spring", an "8" after the year indicates "Fall", and a "6" after the year indicates "Summer".

	Year	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	19732	8	1.6	1.6	1.6
	19738	5	1.0	1.0	2.6
	19742	16	3.2	3.2	5.8
	19746	3	.6	.6	6.4
	19748	1	.2	.2	6.6
	19752	15	3.0	3.0	9.5
	19758	2	.4	.4	9.9
	19762	9	1.8	1.8	11.7
	19766	3	.6	.6	12.3
	19768	3	.6	.6	12.9
	19772	8	1.6	1.6	14.5
	19776	5	1.0	1.0	15.5
	19778	1	.2	.2	15.7
	19782	8	1.6	1.6	17.3
	19786	1	.2	.2	17.5
	19788	4	.8	.8	18.3
	19792	12	2.4	2.4	20.7
	19796	3	.6	.6	21.3
	19798	8	1.6	1.6	22.9
	19802	9	1.8	1.8	24.7
	19806	6	1.2	1.2	25.8
	19808	9	1.8	1.8	27.6
	19812	11	2.2	2.2	29.8
	19816	10	2.0	2.0	31.8
	19818	5	1.0	1.0	32.8
	19822	14	2.8	2.8	35.6
	19826	2	.4	.4	36.0
	19828	5	1.0	1.0	37.0
	19832	7	1.4	1.4	38.4
	19836	4	.8	.8	39.2
	19838	4	.8	.8	40.0
	19842	3	.6	.6	40.6
	19846	1	.2	.2	40.8
	19848	2	.4	.4	41.2
	19852	6	1.2	1.2	42.3
	19856	3	.6	.6	42.9
	19858	5	1.0	1.0	43.9
	19862	8	1.6	1.6	45.5
	19866	2	.4	.4	45.9
	19868	6	1.2	1.2	47.1
	19872	6	1.2	1.2	48.3
	19876	3	.6	.6	48.9
	19878	6	1.2	1.2	50.1
	19882	6	1.2	1.2	51.3
	19886	2	.4	.4	51.7

	Year	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	19888	6	1.2	1.2	52.9
	19892	6	1.2	1.2	54.1
	19896	3	.6	.6	54.7
	19898	7	1.4	1.4	56.1
	19902	3	.6	.6	56.7
	19906	2	.4	.4	57.1
	19908	6	1.2	1.2	58.3
	19912	7	1.4	1.4	59.6
	19916	4	.8	.8	60.4
	19918	7	1.4	1.4	61.8
	19922	3	.6	.6	62.4
	19926	4	.8	.8	63.2
	19928	10	2.0	2.0	65.2
	19932	8	1.6	1.6	66.8
	19936	1	.2	.2	67.0
	19938	8	1.6	1.6	68.6
	19942	7	1.4	1.4	70.0
	19946	4	.8	.8	70.8
	19948	3	.6	.6	71.4
	19952	6	1.2	1.2	72.6
	19956	3	.6	.6	73.2
	19958	4	.8	.8	74.0
	19962	11	2.2	2.2	76.1
	19966	6	1.2	1.2	77.3
	19968	4	.8	.8	78.1
	19972	6	1.2	1.2	79.3
	19976	5	1.0	1.0	80.3
	19978	6	1.2	1.2	81.5
	19982	10	2.0	2.0	83.5
	19986	9	1.8	1.8	85.3
	19988	7	1.4	1.4	86.7
	19992	11	2.2	2.2	88.9
	19996	7	1.4	1.4	90.3
	19998	3	.6	.6	90.9
	20002	12	2.4	2.4	93.2
	20006	12	2.4	2.4	95.6
	20008	11	2.2	2.2	97.8
	20012	11	2.2	2.2	100.0
	Total	503	100.0	100.0	

Appendix C

Years to Graduation

	# of Years	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2.00	1	.2	.2	.2
	3.00	10	2.0	2.0	2.2
	3.50	5	1.0	1.0	3.2
	4.00	88	17.5	17.5	20.7
	4.50	145	28.8	28.9	49.6
	5.00	35	7.0	7.0	56.6
	5.50	149	29.6	29.7	86.3
	6.00	9	1.8	1.8	88.0
	6.50	39	7.8	7.8	95.8
	7.00	3	.6	.6	96.4
	7.50	10	2.0	2.0	98.4
	8.50	4	.8	.8	99.2
	9.00	1	.2	.2	99.4
	9.50	1	.2	.2	99.6
	10.50	1	.2	.2	99.8
	11.50	1	.2	.2	100.0
	Total	502	99.8	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.2		
Total		503	100.0		

Appendix D
NIU Major

College	Major	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	+++++	1	.2	.2	.2
B	ACCOUNTING	7	1.4	1.4	1.6
L	ANTHROPOLOGY	1	.2	.2	1.8
V	ART	12	2.4	2.4	4.2
V	ART EDUCATION	2	.4	.4	4.6
L	BIOLOGY	9	1.8	1.8	6.4
L	BIOLOGY AND CHEMISTRY	1	.2	.2	6.6
L	BIOLOGY EDUCATION	1	.2	.2	6.8
B	BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION	1	.2	.2	7.0
B	BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE	1	.2	.2	7.2
B	BUSINESS AND SPANISH TRANSLATION	2	.4	.4	7.6
B	BUSINESS EDUCATION	1	.2	.2	7.8
H&E	CHILD DEVELOPMENT	16	3.2	3.2	10.9
L	COMMUNICATION	43	8.5	8.5	19.5
L	COMMUNICATION AND EDUCATION	2	.4	.4	19.9
H	COMMUNICATIVE DISORDERS	8	1.6	1.6	21.5
H	COMMUNITY HEALTH	11	2.2	2.2	23.7
L	COMPUTER SCIENCE	20	4.0	4.0	27.6
L	COMPUTER SCIENCE AND ECONOMICS	1	.2	.2	27.8
L	CRIMINAL JUSTICE	4	.8	.8	28.6
L	CRIMINOLOGY	10	2.0	2.0	30.6
H	DIETETICS AND NUTRITION	2	.4	.4	31.0
L	ECONOMICS	16	3.2	3.2	34.2
E	EDUCATION	29	5.8	5.8	40.0
EN	ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY	3	.6	.6	40.6
E	ELEMENTARY EDUCATION	18	3.6	3.6	44.1
L	ENGLISH	9	1.8	1.8	45.9
L	ENGLISH AND THEATER	1	.2	.2	46.1
	ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE	1	.2	.2	46.3
H	FAMILY AND INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT	16	3.2	3.2	49.5
H	FASHION MERCHANDISING	12	2.4	2.4	51.9
B	FINANCE	6	1.2	1.2	53.1
B	FINANCE AND ECONOMICS	1	.2	.2	53.3
A	FINE ARTS	4	.8	.8	54.1
L	GENERAL STUDIES	11	2.2	2.2	56.3
L	GEOGRAPHY	1	.2	.2	56.5
A	GRAPHIC ARTS	1	.2	.2	56.7
H	HEALTH ADMINISTRATION	2	.4	.4	57.1
H	HEALTH EDUCATION	1	.2	.2	57.3
L	HISTORY	10	2.0	2.0	59.2
L	HISTORY AND EDUCATION	2	.4	.4	59.6
B	HUMAN RESOURCES	4	.8	.8	60.4
EN	INDUSTRIAL ENGINEERING	2	.4	.4	60.8
EN	INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGY	9	1.8	1.8	62.6
L	JOURNALISM	15	3.0	3.0	65.6

B	MANAGEMENT	16	3.2	3.2	68.8
B	MANAGEMENT AND MARKETING	1	.2	.2	69.0
B	MARKETING	25	5.0	5.0	74.0
L	MATHEMATICS	1	.2	.2	74.2
EN	MECHANICAL ENGINEERING	2	.4	.4	74.6
H	MEDICAL TECHNOLOGY	1	.2	.2	74.8
V	MUSIC	1	.2	.2	75.0
H	NURSING	14	2.8	2.8	77.7
H	NUTRITION	2	.4	.4	78.1
B	OMIS	6	1.2	1.2	79.3
E	PHED	18	3.6	3.6	82.9
L	POLITICAL SCIENCE	16	3.2	3.2	86.1
L	PSYCHOLOGY	17	3.4	3.4	89.5
H	PUBLIC HEALTH	2	.4	.4	89.9
L	SOCIOLOGY	17	3.4	3.4	93.2
L	SPANISH LANGUAGE	2	.4	.4	93.6
E	SPECIAL EDUCATION	20	4.0	4.0	97.6
H	SPEECH PATHOLOGY	2	.4	.4	98.0
EN	TECHNOLOGY	4	.8	.8	98.8
H	TEXTILES	3	.6	.6	99.4
V	THEATER	3	.6	.6	100.0
	Total	503	100.0	100.0	

Appendix E

Additional Education
Did you do college work beyond NIU BA/BS

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	241	47.9	47.9	47.9
	no	262	52.1	52.1	100.0
	Total	503	100.0	100.0	

Work Status
"What is your current work status?"

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	don't know/no response	1	.2	.2	.2
	Working full time	424	84.3	84.3	84.5
	Working part time	21	4.2	4.2	88.7
	unemployed and seeking work	10	2.0	2.0	90.7
	unemployed and not seeking work	7	1.4	1.4	92.0
	going to school	8	1.6	1.6	93.6
	keeping house	23	4.6	4.6	98.2
	retired	1	.2	.2	98.4
	other	8	1.6	1.6	100.0
	Total	503	100.0	100.0	

How likely would you be to recommend the CHANCE program to others?

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	don't know	3	.6
	very likely	421	83.7
	somewhat likely	55	10.9
	not too likely	9	1.8
	not likely at all	15	3.0
	Total	503	100.0

Did you participate in groups or clubs at NIU?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	387	76.9	76.9	76.9
	No	116	23.1	23.1	100.0
	Total	503	100.0	100.0	

Appendix F
Type of Place Employed

	Frequency	Percent
In a business (such as industrial, commercial, service	152	30.2
No response/question skipped	117	23.3
In an elementary/secondary school (including cooperative)	92	18.3
By the federal, state or local government	39	7.8
In a professional firm (such as engineering, law)	36	7.2
Some other type of employment	28	5.6
In a health agency	20	4.0
In a college or university	19	3.8
Total	503	100.0

Appendix F
Current Employment

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
+	58.00	11.53	11.53	11.53
ACCOUNTANT	4.00	0.80	0.80	12.33
ADMINISTRATION	19.00	3.78	3.78	16.10
BUSINESS OWNER	16.00	3.18	3.18	19.28
CUSTOMER SERVICE	5.00	0.99	0.99	20.28
EDUCATION ADMINISTRATION	21.00	4.17	4.17	24.45
EDUCATOR	89.00	17.69	17.69	42.15
EDUCATOR HIGHER	4.00	0.80	0.80	42.94
ENGINEER	14.00	2.78	2.78	45.73
FINANCE	20.00	3.98	3.98	49.70
HEALTH SERVICE	15.00	2.98	2.98	52.68
HIGHER ED ADMIN	12.00	2.39	2.39	55.07
INSURANCE	13.00	2.58	2.58	57.65
IT	21.00	4.17	4.17	61.83
JOURNALISM, WRITING ,COMM	1.00	0.20	0.20	62.03
JOURNALISM, WRITING, COMM	3.00	0.60	0.60	62.62
LAW	5.00	0.99	0.99	63.62
LAW ENFORCEMENT	8.00	1.59	1.59	65.21
MANAGEMENT	34.00	6.76	6.76	71.97
MARKETING	15.00	2.98	2.98	74.95
NURSING	15.00	2.98	2.98	77.93
OTHER	15.00	2.98	2.98	80.91
REAL ESTATE	10.00	1.99	1.99	82.90
RESEARCHER	8.00	1.59	1.59	84.49
SALES	38.00	7.55	7.55	92.05
SOCIAL SERVICE	40.00	7.95	7.95	100.00
Total	503.00	100.00	100.00	

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